

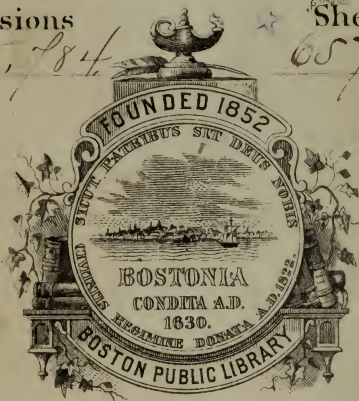


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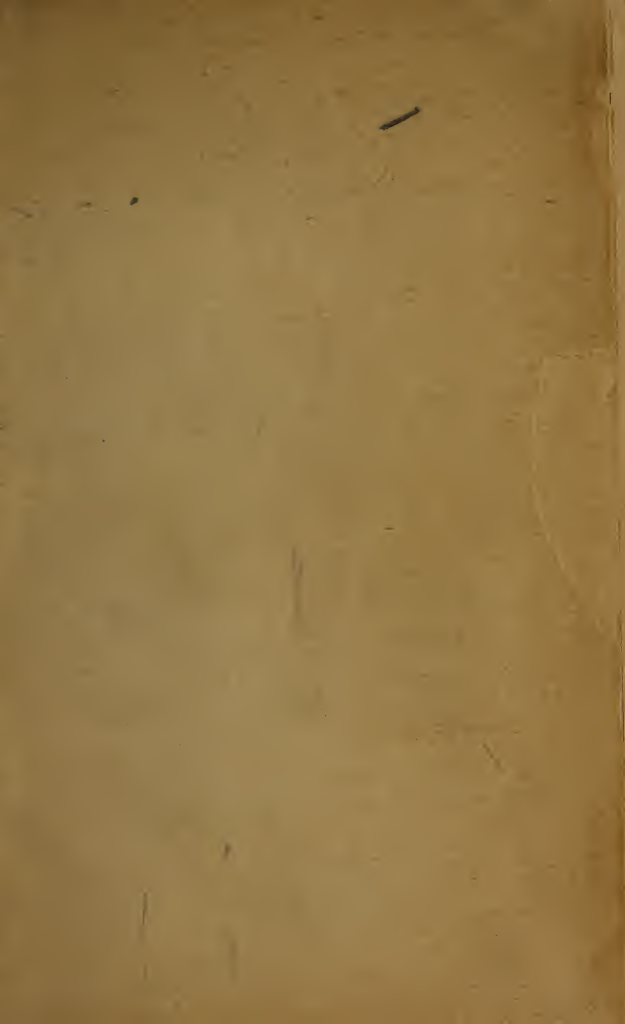
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Nov. 24, 1884



COMFORTABLE LODGINGS:

OR, PARIS IN 1750:

A FARCE,

In Two Acts,

BY RICHARD RRINSLEY PEAKE, ESQ.

*Author of The Haunted Inn, Amateurs and Actors, "Master's Rival,"
The Duel, &c.*

PRINTED FROM THE ACTING COPY, WITH REMARKS,
BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL, BY D—G.

To which are added,

A DESCRIPTION OF THE COSTUME,—CAST OF THE CHARACTERS,
ENTRANCES AND EXITS,—RELATIVE POSITIONS OF THE PER-
FORMERS ON THE STAGE,—AND THE WHOLE OF THE STAGE
BUSINESS.

As now performed at the

THEATRES ROYAL, LONDON.

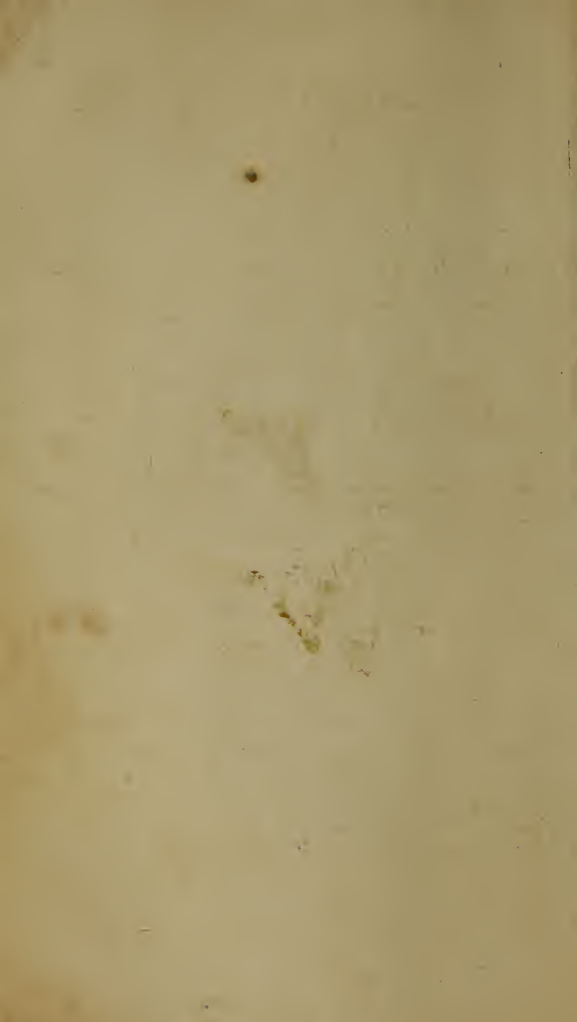
EMBELLISHED WITH A FINE ENGRAVING,

By MR. BONNER, from a Drawing taken in the Theatre, by
MR. R. CRUIKSHANK.

LONDON:

JOHN CUMBERLAND, 2, CUMBERLAND TERRACE,
CAMDEN NEW TOWN.





Comfortable Lodgings.

AN Englishman is the worst fellow in the world to be put out of his way. The slightest inconvenience, the most trifling departure from his wonted habits, he magnifies into a serious evil. His well-stocked larder, his warm fireside, and all the snug appurtenances of a cosey establishment, are ever present to his view; and, in default of these, his spirits flag, he is hipped and melancholy, and his pistols and razors become dangerous implements in his hands. Our ideas of comfort have their origin in early association. A brick floor and a deal table are as great luxuries to *monsieur*, as are Turkey carpets and rose wood, French polished, to his more fastidious neighbour, *mi Lor Anglais*. Foreign travel exhibits John Bull in his own natural light; his peculiarities break forth with whimsical effect, and, though not always the most amiable, are nevertheless entertaining. He longs to see the world and its lions; and having, with due ceremony, arranged his wardrobe, put money in his purse, and procured his passport, he sets forward, buttoned up in his native consequence, to the capital of the grand monarch, to rattle dice and drink champagne. The expectations of John are not the most reasonable. Without considering the different manners and customs of foreign parts, he bends to nobody, yet takes it as an affront if everybody bend not to him. His baggage is subjected to rigorous search. The *parlez vous!*—nothing like this ever happens in merry old England! His passport is inspected, and his person identified,—the inquisitors! to take the length and breadth of a man, his complexion and calling! The barriers are closed, and he must *bivouac* in the *diligence* the live-long night,—monstrous tyranny! every rogue enjoys free ingress and egress in a land of liberty! He patronizes the *Hotel Anglais*, hoping to experience less imposition from those of his *own* country,—in this, alas! he is disappointed; he is fleeced upon the true national principle that, as he can *afford*, he ought to *pay*; this, however, he imputes to that epidemic spirit of roguery which, as an Englishman, he is bound to consider indigenous to every soil but his own! He calls for the bill of fare, and, after contemplating the various *entrées*, unwittingly selects the very one that produces effects similar to those resulting from a particular dish described by Smollett in the *Feast of the Ancients*. Of course, there is a horrible conspiracy to poison him! The wines, too, are sophisticated. The champagne is gooseberry, the Burgundy Pontac, and vin ordinaire neither better nor worse than Braithwait's intermediate. The houses are dirty and dark, the streets muddy and gay, the women pretty well, I thank'e, and the men a parcel of idle vagabonds, blinded with snuff and whiskers; covering themselves with glory, with hardly a rag to cover them. Though an ardent lover of liberty, he cannot quite reconcile this universal rage for *virtu*;—the *poissard* and the *peer* jostling each other in the splendid galleries of the Louvre; the *friseur* contemplating with rapture an undoubted *Raphael*; and the dispenser of Venus de Medecis! Even the air is too thin; he misses his accustomed smoke, and but one drunken dog has he encountered (and he was an Englishman!) to bring to fond remembrance the land we live in. What wonder that he should grow heartily tired of foreign countries, and return to *dulce domum* like a long parted lover, with a still keener sense of enjoyment.

No man suffers indigestion like an Englishman. No man crams down so much, nor is there any one on whom beef and pudding have taken such fast hold. He is born a hypocondriac,—to eat, drink,

and be miserable ; for, with him, dolour waits on drinking, and melancholy on mastication. Of this complexion is Sir Hippington Miff, an unhappy English traveller, whom man delights not, nor (save the drysalter's wife) woman neither. A fatal passion had expatriated him. The wife of his opposite neighbour and friend, flushed with the purple light of love, had whispered in his ear unutterable things ; to prevent the recurrence of these dangerous encounters, he resolved to emulate the far-famed virtue of Addison, on a similar trying occasion, and Sir Hippington whispered in return, "Part, madam, we must ; you have charms, and I have passions." His face is the index of his mind. Once, indeed, he essayed to laugh, but it ended in a cry ; his features are as fixed as a knocker, and any effort at jocularity comes forth just like a double knock. Being himself incapable of mirth, he cannot endure it in others. His valet, Rigmarole, a sprightly Gascon, is sadly put to it ; he accounts it a holyday to laugh, and avails himself of a momentary vacation whenever his master's face, that antidote to merriment, is turned aside. Sir Hippington Miff has journeyed to Paris for the joint purpose of avoiding the wanton wife of his neighbour, the drysalter, and claiming payment of a bond for 20,000 francs on Captain Bonassus, a retired veteran. He desires Rigmarole to procure lodgings,—*comfortable* lodgings ; and here, like the crab, our story must go backward.

For the benevolent purpose of serving a friend, Bonassus had put his signet to the bond in question. That friend, Lieutenant Roué, of the Legion of *Honour*, turns out a rogue, runs away, and leaves the captain to pay the reckoning. Bonassus is ruined ; his daughter must go to a convent ; his ancient sister, Madame Pelagie Bonassus, get married or buried ; and his old comrade, Bombadier Babillard, a precisian and dealer in monosyllables, must turn to the right-about, and seek other quarters. The ladies, however, do not fall in with this summary mode of breaking up the household. The captain is persuaded to retire to the farm of a friend, to avoid the harpies of the law ; and Madame Pelagie, who is a capital concoctress of composing-draughts and maker of pickles, resolves to economise ; to sell her paroquet, chickens, and monkey, to kill her pig, and let her lodgings. The notice announcing her latter intention having caught the eye of Rigmarole, he applies, makes the usual inquiries, the terms are agreed on, and Sir Hippington Miff is, without further ceremony, ushered into his new apartments. Suddenly his ruling passion comes o'er him. What a suspicious-looking staircase ! The people, too, madam, and miss, are equally suspicious ! A complimentary solicitude regarding his health begets a suspicion that the young lady's father is a physician or an undertaker ! and the old lady's profound respect is saluted with the retort courteous of "*gammon !*" He hopes their keys will not fit his trunks ; and an invitation from Madame Pelagie to take a peep at the dressing-closet, is a second edition of the drysalter's wife. He has hardly quietly sat himself down, ere a mysterious personage enters his apartment, and opens the conference in a manner so solemn and imposing, that Sir Hippington becomes alarmed, trembles from head to foot, and expects the revelation of some news of direful import. After sundry low bows, and a liberal dispensation of snuff on the part of the stranger, forth issues the Delphic oracle, that he, Monsieur De Cachet, Intendant of Police, has discovered that a plot is on the tapis to rob him of the bond for twenty thousand francs, and probably to murder him, and that the *little affair* is to be attempted that very night ! He is cautioned how to act ; to be *cheerful* as usual ; to retire to bed at his accustomed hour ; and to keep his

own secret. His suspicions wander as to *who* can be the assassin; and an event transpires to fix them on a person not hitherto suspected. Madame Pelagie had prepared a composing-draught, to lull the nervous excitement of her brother Bonassus; but her solicitude meeting an ungrateful return, the rejected potion lay on the table of Sir Hippington's apartment, and, being espied by Rigmarole, who is as melancholy as a gibbed cat, and as thirsty as a sponge, he seizes, smells, and, from its fragrant odour, swallows it, turns down the cup, and lays the theft at grimalkin's door. Its effects are soon visible on Rigmarole, who at this moment enters the apartment brandishing a razor, and, in a strain of high excitement, offers to shave Sir Hippington Miff. Marking the incongruity of his speech and manner, the suspicious allusions to Sir Hippington's last moments, and his well-filled trunks heavy with specie, the baronet retreats, refuses to be shaved, and fixes his eye with ludicrous horror on his unconscious valet. This produces a counter suspicion that Sir Hippington is less *compos* than usual. Rigmarole, therefore, to prevent mishaps, proceeds to put away his pistols. "An attempt to disarm me!" roars Sir Hippington Miff. Madame Pelagie now enters with a cup of chocolate, and presents it to the baronet. Fresh alarms!—'Tis poison! The old lady presses him to taste—the cockatrice! There's arsenic floating on the top! 'Twas prepared by *herself*—no doubt! Now Rigmarole, after his first ebullition, had been making violent attempts to keep himself awake. Sir Hippington resolves on a bold *experiment*: he hands the cup to his faithless valet, who swallows it. A somniferous fit instantly ensues; he utters certain disjointed sentences, and dies away in his master's arms. Here's a pretty situation for a nervous gentleman! Soon will the poisoned rascal turn black, and go into mourning for himself! The whetting of a knife is heard. What can *that* mean? Sir Hippington looks out at window, and beholds a ruffianly fellow in a red night cap, with his sleeves tucked up, receiving instructions from Madame Pelagie; which, though they refer to the intended slaughter of a *pig*, are so ambiguously expressed, that he applies them to himself. He bellows lustily *murder!* and *carnage!* invokes De Cachet, fires his pistol out at window, and kills the—pig!

Shall we follow Sir Hippington through his subsequent false alarms? Gregory's clumsy downfall of the supper-dishes, which the knight takes for the entry of so many bravos—the adventures of the arm-chair, the dressing-closet, and the bed—the jostling of masters, servants, honest men, and rogues—the alternations of light and darkness, and the whole phantasmagoria of cross purposes, that constitutes a bustling farce of the modern school? Lieutenant Roué, the run-away friend of Captain Bonassus, in his honest attempt to rob Sir Hippington of the fatal bond in order to cancel it, is arrested by Monsieur De Cachet; and the captain and the brigadier return to their old quarters (their cabriolet having opportunely broken down!) just in time to contribute to the general *eclaircissement*. There is a lady in the case, and, of course, a lover. Their difficulties are not many: some trellis-work serves for a ladder, and a window, half concealed by vine-leaves, for an entrance and exit. Babillard, the bombardier, is a fine fellow: with him a monosyllable is a sentence; yet, though niggard of his words, he is not of his coin, but generously offers it to a friend in distress. This farce is exceedingly broad; whoever could refrain to laugh must have made no short sojourn in the cave of Trophonius.

Harley played Rigmarole with his usual point; Liston and John Reeve gave their respective versions of Sir Hippington Miff. Both were sufficiently droll.

Costume.

CAPTAIN BONASSUS.—*First dress*: Green regimental coat, red skirts, cuffs, and collar—white breeches—jack boots—three-cornered cocked hat—white cockade. *Second dress*: Travelling-cloak.

BOMBARDIER BABILLARD.—Green regimental coat, trimmed in the same manner—white breeches—long white military gaiters—black garters and buttons—three-cornered hat—white cockade—knapsack, with three fleur de-lis on it.

VINCENT DORVILLE.—Broad-skirted brown coat, trimmed with lace—yellow satin embroidered waistcoat—buckskin breeches—high boots—three cornered hat—lace ruffles and lappets.

SIR HIPINGTON MIFF.—Broad skirted drab coat, trimmed with lace and large buttons—scarlet waistcoat, trimmed with lace—black velvet breeches—crimson stockings—embroidered clocks—square-toed shoes—buckles—lace ruffles—wig, bag, and sword.

RIGMAROLE.—Postillion's drab jacket—buckskin breeches—jack boots—powdered wig, tail, and bag—three-cornered hat.

ROUE.—Shabby dark blue uniform—white breeches and gaiters—large dark roquelare.

MONSIEUR DE CACHET.—Blue uniform, faced with crimson—white breeches—jack boots—military cloak—three-cornered hat—black cross belts—sabre.

GREGORY.—Peasant's blue frock, stitched with white—blue linen trousers—boots—wig and tail—red nightcap.

ANTOINETTE.—White muslin skirt—black velvet boddice, laced and trimmed with blue—small muslin apron, with pockets, trimmed with ribbon—white stockings—black shoes.

MADAME PELAGIE.—*First dress*: Crimson embroidered satin petticoat, body, and spencer—stomacher, laced with blue—satin and lace mob cap—blue satin shoes, high heels. *Second dress*: Full night-gown—cap. *Third dress*: Same as first.

Cast of the Characters

As Performed at the Theatres Royal, London.

		English Opera Drury Lane. Company, at the March 10, 1827. Adelphi, 1831.
<i>Captain Bonassus, an old French Officer</i>	} Mr. W. Bennett.	Mr. W. Bennett.
<i>Bombardier Babillard, his com- rade</i>	} Mr. O. Smith.	Mr. O. Smith.
<i>Vincent Dorville, lover of An- toinette</i>	} Mr. Southwell.	Mr. J. Bland
<i>Sir Hippington Miff, an En- glish traveller</i>	} Mr. Liston.	Mr. J. Reeve.
<i>Rigmarole, his valet</i>	} Mr. Harley.	Mr. Wrench.
<i>Rouè, a broken lieutenant</i>	} Mr. Archer.	Mr. Benson Hill.
<i>Monsieur de Cachet, Inten- dant of French Police</i>	} Mr. Browne.	Mr. F. Matthews.
<i>Gregory, servant to Bonassus</i>	} Mr. Hughes.	Mr. Salter.
<i>Antoinette, daughter to Bo- nassus</i>	} Miss Pincott.	Miss H. Cawse.
<i>Madame Pelagie, sister to Bonassus</i>	} Mrs. C. Jones.	Mrs. C. Jones.

COMFORTABLE LODGINGS ;

OR, PARIS IN 1750.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the House of Captain Bonassus—a window, L. U. E., with vines growing outside—a French bed, R. in flat, concealed by drapery—a door, L. F.—a door, R. S. E.—and another door, L.—a table and two chairs, C.*

ANTOINETTE *discovered, R., at embroidery ;* VINCENT DORVILLE *near her, L.*

Dor. (L.) Let me beseech you, dear Antoinette—

Ant. (R.) La, Mr. Dorville! you beseech! What's the use of beseeching when you already know the state of my heart?

Dor. Yes; but there is the usual obstruction to the happiness of lovers.

Ant. In the shape of a very obstinate papa.

Dor. I am, from this morning, to give up all idea of marrying you.

Ant. [*Starting.*] Oh! I have stuck my finger and broken my needle!

Dor. It has almost broken my heart, Antoinette.

Ant. I cannot divine his motive, Vincent; of late his disposition is greatly altered.

Dor. You must permit me to have a little conversation with you this evening; I can make my customary entrance at the window yonder. The trellis which supports the vine forms an excellent ladder. Do not say nay, Antoinette; I shall come as usual a little before three, and probably I may have devised some plan to aid our sad cause.

Ant. Should you wake my father—

Dor. He always sleeps soundly.

Ant. Disturb my aunt—

Dor. What! dear old Madame Pelagie Bonassus!—Oh, no! She'll be dreaming of her super-excellent management and economy.

Ant. But the old Bombadier Babillard, my father's companion at arms—

Dor. Should he awake, he will only utter a single word to me; he is a dealer in monosyllables, and gives very short measure. [*Crosses to R.*] Farewell, dear Antoinette!—One kiss!—Ah! can we part thus?—One more, my affianced! [*Kisses her.*] Ah! that we could be once happily united, and settled in my native home!

Ant. Adieu! adieu!—Again, adieu! dear Vincent! [*Exit Dorville, R.*] I am convinced my father's affairs are deranged; I must ask his old confidential friend and fellow-soldier, Mr. Bombadier Babillard; he comes this way; his military education and habits have made him such a precisian, that a single word is the most you can ever extract as a reply.

Enter BOMBADIER BABILLARD, L., crossing to R. with a slow military step.

Mr. Babillard! Mr. Babillard!

Bab. (R.) Halt!

Ant. (L.) I wish to ask you a question, sir, to which I am sure you will reply in as few words as possible.

Bab. Ay.

Ant. I am apprehensive that my father delays informing his family of some impending blow of evil fortune. Tell me, Mr. Babillard—you who know all his secrets—are you aware of any such?

Bab. Yes.

Ant. Pray—pray explain!

Bab. No.

Ant. And why not, dear sir?

Bab. Can't.

Ant. On what grounds?

Bab. Won't.

Ant. I have but one motive for my inquiry; and, since it fails, I shall risk the giving offence to my father by asking him.

Bab. Do.

Captain Bonassus. [*Calling without, R.*] Babillard! Babillard! Where are you?

Bab. Here.

Ant. My papa!

Bab. Ah.

Bon. [*Without, R.*] Antoinette!—Where are you?

Madame Pelagie. [*Without, R.*] Pray, brother, let me persuade you to taste it!

Bon. [*Without, R.*] Taste the devil!—I shan't!

Enter CAPTAIN BONASSUS, with an open letter, R.D.; MADAME PELAGIE following, with a cup in her hand.

Mad. P. Do, my dear brother, taste this; consider your irritable nerves!

Bon. I take physic!—No!

Mad. P. It's a composing-draught. You did not sleep last night: do but drink this, and you will have a delightful slumber.

Bon. Some poppy concoction—no, no!—I'll not touch your narcotic. Bordeaux and brimstone! Oh, here you all are! A letter from Lyons—do you want the news, eh? But I will condescend to let you know my private opinion of affairs, when I tell you in three short words—I am ruined!

Mad. P. Ruined!

Ant. Ruined!

Bon. Ruined past all redemption! [*Crossing to Babillard.*] Do you hear that, you old ramrod?

Bab. Yes.

Bon. You all know, when our regiment was reduced, I threw my little property into trade; and a consummate ass I was for my pains.

Bab. True.

Bon. Hark ye, Master Babillard: I don't intend, now I am ruined, to put up with all your blunt impertinence; it was all very well as long as I was your superior, but now that I am your equal—

Bab. (L.) [*Holding out his hand.*] Shake!

Bon. [*Taking it.*] There, that's as much as to say you beg pardon—you are a man of few words. Here comes the mischief: to enable a comrade to procure a livelihood, I became his security for twenty thousand francs. This letter informs me that my late comrade is a scoundrel!

Bab. Rouè?

Bon. That's the fellow—the ex-lieutenant Rouè!—He has disappeared from Lyons, and I am become responsible for the money; my bond is now the property

of an English merchant, who is on the road to demand payment. I am, as I said before, ruined!

Mad. P. [*Crying.*] Oh, brother! take a little of this.
[*Offering the cup.*]

Bon. What a plague is the use of physicing me now?

Ant. Alas, dear father!

Bon. No whimpering! Prompt military measures must be resorted to: you, daughter, to a convent; you, sister, must get married or buried. Hark ye, Babillard: will you marry my sister?

Bab. No.

[*Madame Pelagie and Antoinette retire up, and sit in the arm-chair, R.*]

Bon. Well, then, march into the hospital of invalids, and play the devil's tattoo with your stick, like a selfish old crab as you are.

Bab. How!

Bon. Yes, a miserly, screwing, saving, pinching, grinding, sober, starved serjeant of bombadiers, reduced from a skeleton battalion! What you have done with your pay and your prize-money I could never find out; for, although in the country washing is as cheap as dirt, as long as I remember, your spatterdashes were always whitened with the lather you shaved yourself with.

Bab. No.

Bon. I have seen your yesterday's beard sticking to the calf of your leg like a cheveux-de-frize. What are you fumbling about in your antiquated leather pockets, hey?

Bab. [*Pulling out a bag of money, and putting it into Bonassus's hand.*] Here.

Bon. What is this, comrade?

Bab. Yours.

Bon. Oh, why?—Psha!—Your hard-earned thrift of thirty years!—No, no! [*Wiping his eyes.*] Go, and lock your bag up, and add your farthings to it, you stupid old penny-wise-and-pound-foolish fellow—I'll not touch it.

Bab. Pride.

Bon. Yes, I own it—I am too proud to snatch the staff from an aged cripple.

Mad. P. [*Rising, and advancing, R.*] Brother Bonassus, you must cease your sentiment and grumbling—you must quit the house—fly!

Bon. If I do, I'll be——

Bab. Hush!

Mad. P. [To *Bonassus*] We shall have your person arrested; once in prison, you are confined for life.

Bon. Life wouldn't last long—I'd swallow a padlock and choke myself.

Ant. [Advancing, L.] For all our sakes—for my sake, dear father, insure your personal safety by immediate flight!

Bon. You all say, fly!—Where the devil shall I fly?

Ant. Go to our friend Everard's farm, fifteen miles distant.

Bon. Well, order Gregory to get out the old cabriolet. Go, females of my establishment—pack up my knapsack; *Babillard* shall accompany me to the farm—quick! [*Exeunt Antoinette and Madame Pelagie, R. D.*] Old comrade!

[Going towards the door, R.]

Bab. Hey.

Bon. In the worst of times we never ran away.

Bab. Yes.

Bon. (R.) When?

Bab. (L.) Twice.

Bon. Where?

Bab. Blenheim.

Bon. Psha!

Bab. Ramilies

Bon. Why, those were the only two battles we were ever in.

Bab. True.

Bon. That wasn't running away, you old fool: we retreated—retreated gloriously! Come along—drive care away. [*Singing.*] Tol de rol lol, &c.

Bab. Rol!

Bon. Fal de ral lal! fal de ral!

Bab. Lal!

Bon. March!—Come, bombardier. [*Exeunt, R. D.*]

SCENE II.—The Exterior of Captain Bonassus's House.

Enter RIGMAROLE, L. S. E.

Rig. Oh! what a thing it is that a sprightly Gascon, as I am, should become servant to a melancholy Englishman!—Here we have just travelled from Lyons—all the amusement I have had on the road was to count my master's sighs: he brings them up from the bottom of his soul like buckets from a well—he has sighed exactly six hundred and ninety-nine times, and laughed but

once—and that laugh ended in a cry. Sir Hippington Miff, my master, will not let me smile in his presence ; so I'll try to get a little risibility to myself when he's away—I wish I could tickle myself up into a laugh. I'll think of Sir Hippington Miff, who, for a sad fellow, says comical things. [Laughs.

Sir Hippington. [Calling without, L. S. E.] Rigmarole !

Rig. Here he is. Now I must listen to his grievances till I am as unhappy as he is.

Enter SIR HIPINGTON MIFF, L. S. E.

Sir H. You have walked off, Mr. Rigmarole, without permission. I dare say I should have found you in a tavern, where you would get tipsy and speak ill of me.

Rig. (R.) La, Sir Hippington Miff! if I had gone to the tavern, it would have been for the purpose of drinking your health.

Sir H. (L.) What! I am looking ill, am I?

Rig. No, master, no; not looking ill. [Aside.] Only ill looking.

Sir H. I shall never be well again!—How is it, Rigmarole, that every body in the world, myself excepted, can be happy?—I endeavour to be cheerful, but it ends in a croak.

Rig. Like a sprightly raven: I am sure, sir, you've tried all methods to recover your spirits—you availed yourself of the best medical aid here.

Sir H. Blockhead! how is it possible that a French physician should understand an English indigestion?

Rig. Ay, sir, I always say, employ the cook instead of the doctor.

Sir H. I detested your cookery: from the moment I arrived on the Continent, the smell of onions has never been from under my nose.

Rig. Lord, sir, what would you have nicer?

Sir H. That's your taste—faugh! I shall return to my own country like a boiled rabbit—pale, and smothered with onions: but all this doesn't answer my question—how is it that I see every body around me happy, and I am not?—You are happy, Rigmarole.

Rig. Pretty well, thank ye, sir.

Sir H. [Aside.] When I visit the theatre, I perceive a thousand joyous faces, all smiling and tittering—why can't I smile? why can't I titter?—No, my countenance is the only one that is melancholy; I hear the people

laugh—I see their muscles relax—my face is as fixed as a brass knocker; and if I do attempt to laugh, it comes out like a double knock—ha! ha!

Rig. Indeed, sir, if you would but do as other people do——

Sir H. I tried to do as other people do—for instance, when I crossed the channel in the packet-boat, other people were all in that situation in which folks are who are unaccustomed to the sea—I tried to do as other people did—no, I only looked on—a disappointed man—I couldn't do as other people did, though I tried ever so much.

Rig. Might your faithful valet inquire the probable cause of your melancholy?—I know I touch a tender string: but you, sir, who have riches and respectability—you, who have filled the high office of Lord Mayor of London——

Sir H. Oh, Rigmarole! in this transitory world a lord mayor has no better chance of happiness than a common marshalman. [*Aside.*] I will confide in this fellow. [*Aloud.*] Know, Rigmarole, that I am a man of principle; you have often wondered why I left my native country—it was my principle caused it.

Rig. Indeed, sir!

Sir H. Downright principle—hear. [*Sighs.*] Opposite my counting-house in London lived a drysalter——

Rig. A drysalter, sir!

Sir H. A drysalter: I shall not mention any names—the drysalter had a wife.

Rig. Ah, there's the rub.

Sir H. A beautiful creature; plump, but pale, living in the city air: the drysalter was my intimate friend; but the wife—[*Sighs.*] was for ever peeping and peering over her blinds at me—that, you know, was a very suspicious circumstance.

Rig. Very, sir.

Sir H. I at last discovered—I shan't tell you how, that I had won her affections: I am not handsome, but I won her affections—she yearned for me. [*Rigmarole endeavours to suppress a laugh.*] What's the matter?

Rig. [*Sobbing.*] Sir, I am—really affected.

Sir H. I thought you would feel it. Well, as matters stood, what was to be done?—Could I injure my friend, the drysalter? no!—Could I, in short, behave paw paw? no!—I felt that I had a heart within me, warm

like the heater of a tea-urn ; principle came to my aid ; principle seated me in a Dover stage ; principle principally drove me to the Continent.

Rig. Ah, sir !

[*Affects to weep.*]

Sir H. It was a hard struggle, though ; she looked devilish handsome in her silk stockings at my Easter ball.

[*Crosses, R.*]

Rig. Sir, I can sympathize ; your feelings did you honour.

Sir H. Yes ; but my feelings will not let me reside in yonder hotel, to be made the prey of landlord, chambermaids, and waiters. Rigmarole, you must seek apartments for me,—anything that is retired—[*Crosses, L.*] that is likely to be comfortable ; I want comfortable lodgings—I must then look after my little private affairs.

Rig. Yes, sir ; and receive the money due upon the bond of the merchant, Bonassus, which you purchased : we must find, first, where he lives. Shall I go and look for lodgings now, sir ?

Sir H. Yes, go : comfortable apartments, remember.

Rig. [*Aside.*] Oh, happiness ! I can have a penny-worth of laughing by myself !—Oh, delightful !

[*Exit Rigmarole, R., Sir Hippington Miff, L.*]

Enter CAPTAIN BONASSUS and BOMBADIER BABILLARD, with a knapsack, &c., from the house, R. D. F., followed by ANTOINETTE.

Bom. Good by, sister Pelagie ! farewell, Antoinette ! Come along, Bombadier.

Bab. Ha !

Ant. One word, dear father—you have prohibited the visits of Vincent Dorville—

Bon. To be sure I have ; he must not be drawn into our ruin by wedding you ; so I took a favourable opportunity to insult him : this morning I gave him a sickener.

Ant. Ah, sir !

Bon. There, go in—good by ! it may be months before we meet again. Bombadier, forward !

Bab. March ! [*Exeunt Bonassus and Babillard, L.*]

Ant. I am sure, if poverty assailed Vincent, I should like him, if possible, better than I do now.

Enter MADAME PELAGIE, from the house, R. D. F

Mad. P. (R. C.) They're gone ! you perceive how irri-

table your father has become, and equally obstinate, my dear. The house is left in my charge; I shall make no reform; my brother is gone probably for some time—we must economise; there are more rooms in the building than we can possibly occupy: I shall let that suite of apartments.

Ant. (c.) I think, aunt, my father should have been apprised—

Mad. P. Pooh! pooh! I'll be answerable for consequences; and now, to decrease expense, I shall sell my paroquet, monkey, and chickens; I shall order Gregory immediately to kill the pig, that he may not eat us out of house and home. Ah, my dear, how little does man appreciate the wisdom and economy of the gentler sex.

[*Exeunt Madame Pelagie and Antoinette, into the house, R. D. F.*

Enter ROUÈ, meanly dressed, half military, R.

Rouè. So, at last at Paris; and I'll be bound I'm the greatest rip in it: once a gay lieutenant, now a runaway bankrupt: no matter, I will only sin once more, and that shall be in a virtuous cause—"I love virtue, though I don't practise it"—no matter, old Captain Bonassus gave security to start me in the world, and ever since I've gone backwards instead of forwards: no matter, old Bonassus must not suffer—I am not rascal enough to let him. I have traced the English fool who holds the bond to yonder hotel; I have come two hundred and twenty miles to put my hand into his portmanteau to tear up the paper, and relieve my generous old captain—desperate act!—no matter, to-night I'll do it—I'll climb like a cat into Sir Hippington Miff's bed-room, and frighten some of them—perhaps they'll catch me—no matter, old Bonassus's bond must be destroyed. [*Exit, l.*

Enter MONSIEUR DE CACHET, R., wrapped in a cloak—he crosses after Rouè, l.

SCENE III.—*The Apartment as before—a cup of wine on the table—a large easy chair, l.*

Enter ANTOINETTE, R. D.

Ant. This sudden whim of my aunt Pelagie to let the apartments!—It is next to impossible. They will be hired to-day, so it cannot interfere with my appoint-

ment with Vincent this evening. Oh, for the approach of the evening star! [*Looking at the table.*] She has left my papa's sleeping-potion here.

Enter MADAME PELAGIE, R. D.

Mad. P. Congratulate me, Antoinette!—Whilst I was affixing a paper announcing “Lodgings to Let,” a smart young fellow has requested to view them. Oh, there's the sleeping-potion! I have had my trouble for nothing. However, I will not throw it away—I may want to sleep myself. [*Calling off, R. D.*] Please to walk up, sir.

Rigmarole. [*Without, R. D.*] This way?—Oh, very well.

Enter RIGMAROLE, R. D.

The staircase is very steep—once lose your footing, and you'll soon be at the landing-place. Master's absent—I may laugh. [*Laughing.*] Pretty apartments—very pretty!—Pretty furniture—very pretty! [*Seeing Antoinette.*] Pretty lady—very pretty! [*Ogling her—Madame Pelagie interfering.*] Pretty behaviour—very pretty! I presume, madam, all the other furniture corresponds.

Mad. P. I have a written inventory, sir.

Rig. Written!—Corresponding, certainly! [*Laughing.*] Ha! ha! Master's away. [*Laughing.*] Ha! ha! ha! I suppose, madam, you find china and earthenware, and all that? [*Going to the closet, L. D. F.*] This is a cupboard—ahem!—All sorts of conveniences—ahem!

Mad. P. You said your master was an English nobleman

Rig. Yes; and he is very particular.

Mad. P. If you occupy the apartments, you must favour me with his name, as you are aware it is required by the police regulations.

Rig. The police of our great nation is admirably conducted—admirably! The terms you mentioned, they will do—we don't care for money—we are very rich. My master's name is Sir Hippington Miff.

Mad. P. Miff!

Rig. Miff. There are a large family of the Miffs in England.

Ant. An English nobleman, I think you said?

Rig. Yes, miss, an English nobleman. [*Half aside.*] That is to say, he was Lord Mayor of London ten years ago. Having concluded preliminaries, [*Crossing, R.*]

you will excuse me, ladies, whilst I step over to the hotel, and bring my master and the other luggage directly. [*Aside.*] Luggage!—There's a charming little baggage there! [*Laughing.*] Ha! ha! ha! Sir Hippy's away. [*Laughing.*] Ha! ha! ha! [*Exit, R. D.*]

Mad. P. (R.) Well, Antoinette, we have done wonders; but you appear discontented.

Ant. (L.) I think this step ought not to have been taken without the concurrence of my father. [*Aside.*] How shall I postpone Vincent's appointment to-night? He has left town for the day, and I cannot apprise him.

Mad. P. An English nobleman!

Ant. [*Aside.*] He'll climb in at the window at twelve.

Mad. P. We must use our utmost endeavours to fascinate him; I shall put on all my powers of attraction. And now he comes—I wonder how he will first address us. [*She adjusts her cap, and assumes a stately attitude.*]

Sir Hippington. [*Without.*] O, my poor back! my poor back!

Enter SIR HIPINGTON MIFF, followed by RIGMAROLE, with luggage, R. D.

What a suspicious-looking staircase!

Mad. P. He has decidedly a high carriage.

Sir H. Steep as the Monument? Who are these persons, pray?

Rig. (R.) Your landlady and her niece, sir.

Sir H. (R. c.) What do they want?

Mad. P. [*Advancing ceremoniously, L. c.—Sir Hippington retreats.*] If I cannot express the inexpressible honour and profound respect that I feel for your person and consideration, it is that I am awed by the condescension in selecting our humble roof for your residence.

Sir H. [Aside.] Gammon!

Mad. P. Conscious dignity in his manner!

Ant. (L.) I trust, sir——

[*Courtesying and crossing to Sir Hippington.*]

Sir H. Now the little one's going to let off at me!

Ant. (L. c.) I trust you have enjoyed your health since you have been in France.

Sir H. No one asks without an interested motive! [*Aside to Rigmarole.*] I suspect that girl's father is a physician.

Rig. [Aside to Sir Hippington.] Yes, sir; or her uncle an undertaker.

Mad. P. Will my lor have the goodness to inspect the apartments?

Sir H. My lord!—That's flattering—hav'nt been called my lord these ten years. 'Pon my life, these Frenchwomen are very prettily spoken. I'll try and think better of them—hope their keys won't fit my trunks!

Mad. P. Would it please my lor to like to peep at the dressing-closet?

Sir H. [*Aside.*] Peep at the dressing-closet!—That's a little queer, isn't it? Second edition of the Drysalter's Wife!

Mad. P. This way, my lor. Antoinette, it is proper that you accompany us.

Sir H. Oh, with a third person I am safe!

[*Exeunt Madame Pelagie, Antoinette, and Sir Hippington Miff, into the dressing-closet, L. D. F.*]

Rig. (R.) Pleasant creature Sir Hippy is, with his suspicions! Never lost sight of me the whole day—no opportunity to get a glass of wine, or even a melancholy drink of cold water. I'm as thirsty as a sponge. [*Looking at table, near R. U. E.*] And here, I take it, is a cup of something good. [*Smelling it.*] Smells nice!—Wine, upon my honour!—Mulled and spiced! [*Looking round.*] I wonder whether the cat ever comes in here, and knocks anything over! Sir Hippington Miff, here's your health!—Ladies, yours! [*Drinks.*] Bless my soul! the cup's empty! I'll turn it over, and lay the fault at pussy's door.

Sir H. [*Looking out of the dressing-closet.*] Fetch the other trunks from the hotel. [*Retires.*]

Rig. [*Confused.*] Ye—yes, sir! No, he didn't see me drink! Fetch the trunks! Well, I have warmed my own chest! [*Laughing.*] Ha! ha! Sir Hippy's away! [*Exit, laughing, R. D.*]

Enter SIR HIPINGTON MIFF, L. D. F.

Sir H. Another door to my dressing-room, by which the ladies have departed! That's a very suspicious circumstance! This is the oddest shaped house—can't say much for the comforts—there are no comforts in France: snuffy soup, greasy cookery, indigestion. They talk of their artists of the kitchen—call them all artists, whether they model marble or perigord patés! At Lyons, I wanted on Christmas Day—natural enough for an En-

glishman—a plum-pudding;—one wouldn't imagine that there was anything more simple than an English plum-pudding. [*Sighs.*] Cassandra gave me her recipe, and I sent it to the French cook: the foreign fool couldn't comprehend the meaning, but took it to a chymist's to be made up. At dinner-time, said I, where is my plum-pudding? Boiled, said my valet. When, horror! in it came from the chymist's, plums and all, spread upon a large piece of white leather!

Enter MADAME PELAGIE, R. D.

Mad. P. A gentleman wishes to speak to you, sir.

Sir H. I don't know a gentleman in the place. [*Aside.*] This old madame pops in and out like a jack-o'-lantern! [*Aloud.*] You must show the gentleman up, I suppose.

Mad. P. This way, sir.

Enter MONSIEUR DE CACHET, in a cloak, R. D.—he bows, and looks at his note-book.

De C. [*Reading.*] “*May 16th, anno domini 1750.*”—You, sir, are Sir Hippington Miff.

Sir H. That is my name, sir.

De C. I would wish to say a few words to you alone— [*Pointing to Madame Pelagie.*]—quite alone.

Sir P. This is very suspicious! Madame, go down stairs! [*Exit Madame Pelagie, R. D.*]

De C. You are quite sure we cannot be overheard?

Sir H. I am not sure of anything of the sort. [*De Cachet walks deliberately to all the doors, listens, nods, and returns*] What the devil is all this about?

De C. (L.) I shall take off my cloak.

[*Puts his cloak on the table.*]

Sir H. Yes, sir, pray unfold yourself. [*Aside.*] How mysterious! [*De Cachet offers his snuff-box—Sir Hippington takes a pinch.*] Very extraordinary! [*Aloud.*] Will you favour me with your business, sir?

De C. My name, sir, may not be unknown to you—it is De Cachet.

Sir H. De Cachet! Any relation, sir, to the celebrated Minister of Police?

De C. I am the Intendant of Police, sir.

Sir H. The deuce you are! [*Aside.*] I have done nothing.

De C. I shall not enter into a detail of the extraordinary resources I possess of procuring information, which

enable me to prevent the commission of crime, and to detect offenders. [Offering his box.]

Sir H. [Taking a pinch.] Pray go on, sir.

De C. You, perhaps, have heard my name lauded in that particular.

Sir H. I have understood that no ruffian is safe under your—[Sneezing.]—beg your pardon—administration. You make it a point that aggressors shall always be taken in the act—[Sneezing.]—ask your pardon—and executed promptly. [Aside.] Curse the minister's snuff!

De C. You have said your name is Sir Hippington Miff.

Sir H. Yes; but I am not aware that I have ever given offence to the constituted authorities.

De C. [Looking at his note-book.] You are a British merchant; you have journeyed from Lyons; you there purchased a bond for twenty thousand francs.

Sir H. Bless me! all this is correct. What does it lead to?

De C. Listen, sir. In consequence of your holding that bond, I have the honour to inform you that you will be robbed and probably murdered to-night.

Sir H. What!

De C. Inevitably.

Sir H. Oh!

De C. If I, the Minister of Police, do not exert myself to prevent it. [Handing his snuff-box.]

Sir H. How can you offer snuff in such a predicament! Where's my man? I'll quit this place directly!

De C. Hold, sir! Unless you obey my dictates, I will not answer for your safety. I can attend personally to this little affair this evening.

Sir H. [Aside.] Calls my murder a little affair!

De C. To-morrow I am otherwise engaged.

Sir H. So shall I be, if I am killed to-night! My servant shall sit up with me.

De C. That I must positively prohibit. I venture to assure you that your property, and perhaps your life, depend upon your acting as if you were perfectly unconcerned. Conduct yourself with your usual cheerfulness.

Sir H. Very miserable at all times!

De C. Go to bed precisely at the usual hour.

Sir H. Never to get up again! Mayn't I just caution our landlady?

De C. If you value your existence, this timely infor-

mation, or my future aid, you will not intrust this secret either to the mistress of the house or the servant.—Farewell, Sir Hippington Miff!—The police agents will be near you in the hour of danger. Adieu! [*Exit, R. D.*]

Sir H. You're very good, sir. [*Sneezing, and bowing him out.*] Monsieur De Cachet particularly said, don't trust your valet nor your landlady. I'm to be robbed—probably murdered: who is to do it if they don't?

[*Seats himself in the easy chair, L.*]

Enter RIGMAROLE, R. D., with shaving-apparatus, rather excited by the potion—he comes behind Sir Hippington, opening the razor.

Rig. Ahem!

Sir H. [*Starting.*] Hey! What the devil——

Rig. Come, sir; you were too nervous this morning; you must be shaved. [*Aside.*] Come, sir—ahem! Latherum, smotherum, shavearum, beardabus!

Sir H. [*Aside.*] What an alteration in his manner!

Rig. Yaw!—What's the matter with you?

Sir H. Your hand shakes at this moment!

Rig. [*Flourishing the razor.*] My hand shake! Sir, I could shave a fly's eye-brow!

Sir H. Your hand shakes, I say.

Rig. (R.) Ay, master, why do you fix your eye so in that dreadful manner, as if your last moments were come? If my hand shakes—why it does; it is lugging about your trunks, which are so heavy with specie.

Sir H. (L.) Specie! [*Aside.*] That's his point. Rich wretch that I am, Rigmarole, as your hand shakes, you shan't cut my throat—shave my beard, I mean. I am more nervous than I was in the morning.

Rig. [*Apart.*] Well, I never saw him so distrustful before,—I feel very strangely myself. When he is in this way, I hide everything that would endanger his life, even to the very riband I tie my tail with, for fear he should hang himself. I'll put his pistols out of the way. [*Removes them from the luggage off the table.*]

Sir H. What are you about with those, sir?

Rig. Fresh flints, sir.

Sir H. [*Aside.*] Evidently wishes to disarm me.

Madame P. [*Without, R. D.*] I shall administer it to my lor myself.

Sir H. What the devil is she going to administer,—an old cockatrice!

Enter MADAME PELAGIE, with a cup, R.

Mad. P. My lor, I have intruded on your privacy to state.—

Sir H. [Turning, sees *Rigmarole* stealing off with his pistols.] Bring those pistols back, sir! [*Rigmarole* offers them reluctantly.] Turn the barrels the other way. [Takes them.] Now state away, madam.

Mad. P. [Crosses to *Sir Hippington*.] I beg to remark that we are famous for our preparation of chocolate; will you please to taste it?

Rig. (R.) [Making signs to *Madame Pelagie*.] Don't, he is such an odd mixture.

Sir H. (L.) [Watching, and overhearing.] Odd mixture! poison, perhaps!—I fancy I see the arsenic floating on the top—she is pressing it so, too. You're very kind, madam. [Aside.] Deceitful old civet-cat! I have it—I'll prove her—I'll ask her to taste it herself. [Looking steadfastly in her face.] *Madame Pelagie Bonassus*, will you drink this chocolate?

Mad. P. I prepared it expressly for you.

Sir H. [Aside.] I believe you—a hen devil! I'll make her taste it. Swallow three mouthful of this, *Madame Bonassus*. [Eyeing her.]

Mad. P. [Smiling.] No, no, my lor—it is for—I shall leave it for you, my lor. [Apart.] I must give directions to *Gregory* about killing the pig. [Calls.] *Gregory!* *Gregory!* [Exit, R. D.]

Sir H. Who the deuce is *Gregory*?—One of her associates in guilt.

Rig. [After a struggle to keep himself awake.] Booh! La, sir! why didn't you drink a little of madame's chocolate?—I shouldn't have made such wry faces about it, if I had been you.

Sir H. You! [Aside.] Faithless wretch!—A bold idea strikes me—I will try the experiment on him. Have you any objection to taste this odd mixture, Mr. *Rigmarole*? [Giving him the cup.] Drink, but remember it is your own act and deed.

Rig. Sir, I am very much obliged to you.

[Drinks, and places the cup on the table.]

Sir H. How do you feel?

Rig. Hush-a-by, lul-a-by, bow, wow, wow!

[Sinking into lethargy.]

Sir H. Delirious!

Rig. Oh, Sir Tiffy! [*Turns uneasily.*] Sleepy as death!

Sir H. It works!

Rig. Oh, yes! [*Pointing to the table.*] Sleep, Sir Tippy Miffery—muz! bob! fish! pip!

[*Falls insensibly into Sir Hippington's arms.*]

Sir H. Here's a situation for a nervous timid gentleman!—How heavy this poisoned rascal is—he will turn black presently, and go into mourning for himself. [*Noise—the whetting of a knife is heard outside the window, L. U. E.*] What the devil's that? [*Drops Rigmarole into the easy chair, L., and runs to the window.*] A fellow in a red night-cap, sleeves tucked up, and has a knife as long as my arm.

Mad. P. [*Without, L. U. E.*] Gregory! Gregory!

Sir H. [*At the window, L. U. E.*] Gregory! the old hag's bravo?

Mad. P. [*Without.*] Make your knife quite sharp—I should like the poor creature to die easily.

Sir H. [*Drawing his sword.*] Should you?

Gre. [*Without, L. U. E.*] See how it cuts, madame.

Mad. P. Very well, bravo!

Sir H. Bravo! she calls him a bravo!

Gre. Madame, will you have him stuck in the wash-house or in the yard?

Mad. P. [*Without, L. U. E.*] Put him out of his misery in the wash-house.

Sir H. [*Taking his pistols.*] You must get me down stairs first. Carnage!—De Cachet! De Cachet! curse your police punctilio!—I'll show them I'm on the alert. [*Firing out at the window.*] There, Gregory! [*The pig squeaks.*] I've killed somebody! [*Brandishing his sword.*] D'ye call these "COMFORTABLE LODGINGS?"

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Room of Madame Pelagie.*

Enter ANTOINETTE and MADAME PELAGIE, R.

Ant. (L. C.) Are you satisfied with Sir Hippington Miff's explanation, aunt?

Mad. P. (C.) My lor states that he was labouring un-

der a very singular delusion: Sir Hippington comes this way,—I trust, to make his personal apologies.

Enter SIR HIPINGTON MIFF, R.

Sir H. [R. C.] [*Aside.*] That false alarm! what an old ass I was: but it did appear very frightful. [*Aloud.*] Ladies, I hope I have not alarmed the neighbourhood?

Mad. P. The neighbours are accustomed to reports.

Ant. My father is in the habit of practising with pistols at a mark.

Sir H. That's suspicious! I'm to be the mark her father is to pop at.

Mad. P. We shall be very glad when the opportunity occurs of presenting you to him.

Sir H. I'd better pay damages. Madame, any damages I may have committed I will cheerfully compensate; please to put it down to the bill.

Enter GREGORY, with a letter, L.

Mad. P. Well, Gregory.

Sir H. [*Starting.*] There's the pig-killer!

Gre. Letter, madame, for Sir Hippington Miff.

Sir H. [*Afraid to touch it.*] I've heard of letters that explode with chymical matter.

Mad. P. Pray, Gregory, what damage was done by my lor's firing the pistols out of the window?

Gre. (L.) Deadly damage, madame; one bullet killed the pig.

Sir H. Poor pig! anything else?

Gre. Another shot knocked a hole in the water-cask, which has been squirting away ever since.

Sir H. (L. C.) Anything else?

Gre. The parrot has been in fits this hour, madame's monkey has run into a jack-boot, and I can't get him out.

Sir H. Pull his tail.—Anything else?

Gre. I have ever so much; the chickens have all flown over the wall.

Sir H. Cry "Coobiddy, coobiddy!" and they'll all come back again. Anything else?

Gre. No—yes; the tassel of my red night cap is carried off.

Mad. P. Gregory, you can go down and lay the cloth for supper.

Sir H. Supper!

Mad. P. Sir Hippington Miff will do honour to a made dish or two?

Sir H. Made dishes!—Suspicious!

Gre. The letter, sir. [*Offering it.*] Here, sir, the letter.

[*Sir Hippington fetches the tongs from R. S. E., and takes it out of Gregory's hand—Gregory stares, and goes off, L.—Sir Hippington drops the letter from the tongs, and, after watching Gregory off, jumps heavily upon it, to discover if it would explode.*

Sir H. [*Cautiously taking up the letter.*] Subscribed "De Cachet"—oh, this will relieve my anxiety. [*Reads, aside.*] "*Sir Hippington Miff's patience is entreated till twelve o'clock; by that hour all will be over*"—all will be over!—"And the culprit in the hands of the police. *Sir Hippington Miff must not let his cheerfulness leave him, and must retire to bed as usual—DE CACHET.*"—My fit is coming on again!

Mad. P. My lor is looking melancholy.

Sir H. Melancholy, madame! I'm the most joyous creature under the sun. [*Aside.*] Cheerful as a death-watch. The only chance I have of elevating my spirits is by paying a little amorous attention to pretty Antoinette here—ahem! [*Assuming a gay air, and fetching chairs.*] Ladies, sitting is not more expensive than standing—be seated, pray. [*Antoinette and Madame Pelagie sit—Sir Hippington seats himself with his back to Madame Pelagie, and takes Antoinette's hand.*] Ah, Cassandra!

Ant. (R.) Sir!

Sir H. (C.) Miss Antoinette, I mean—what a sweet, delightful, plump, taper, round, delicate style of hand you have.

Ant. You flatter, sir.

Mad. P. Heyday! [*Rising.*] I don't admire all this familiarity. [*Placing her chair between Antoinette's and Sir Hippington's, and taking Antoinette's hand away.*] My lor condescends too much. [*Drawing off her glove, and presenting her hand.*] There, my lor is a hand at your service.

Sir H. [*Reluctantly.*] Delightful! madame, this is a hand! [*Aside.*] Been making pickles.

Mad. P. To drive away gloomy ideas, will my lor honour us by singing one of the songs of his country?

Sir H. Oh, no, never! I can't.

Ant. Pray, pray, favour us, sir.

Sir H. Ah, Cassandra! I must attempt a song to appear cheerful—'pon my honour, I—well, if I must, [*Rising.*] I will endeavour to describe the opening of the Easter ball, with the minuet-de-la-cour in the year of my mayoralty. [*They rise.*] Allow me to remove your seats, ladies. [*He places Madame Pelagie's chair at the l. corner, and Antoinette's R., then advances, c., and points to the orchestra.*] Fancy all the musicians there.

SONG.—SIR HIPINGTON MIFF.

La, li lari, lari la la, lira lira la!
Graceful step and cross the lighted hall;
Foot it featly, neatly, and sweetly!—Thus I
Lead off the Easter ball.

Then on my tiptoe soft advance-a,
Powder'd peruke—entrance her;
White glove extending,
Much grace intending—
Stiff skirts unbending,—
Ha!

[*Symphony, part of the tune to which he dances—he bows.*

And if my partner
Has any heart in her,
With great eclat we go
Through the stately minuet,
Delighting all Cornhill, Cheapside, and Bucklersbury!

[*Commences the gavotte.*

[*A tremendous crash heard without, l.—Gregory cries out—they rise.*

Sir H. [*In great tribulation.*] They're come at last!
[*Catching up a chair.*] I'll defend myself to the last extremity!

Mad. P. For mercy's sake, what's the matter?

Sir H. As if you didn't know, Jenny Diver!

Enter GREGORY, l.

Gre. Oh, la!—Oh, dear!

Mad. P. What has happened?

Sir H. How many are there of them?

Gre. Four. I was carrying supper up, and I tumbled over my lord's cocked hat-box, and all four dishes have rattled down stairs!

Mad. P. The made-dishes!

Gre. Gravy and all—all gone!

Mad. P. [*To Sir Hippington.*] I had prepared the dishes expressly for you.

Sir H. Ha!

Mad. P. What time will my lor go to bed?

Sir H. [*Aside.*] She wants to ascertain the precise minute!

Mad. P. Come, Antoinette; my lor will intimate when he would wish to retire for the night. [*Aside.*] My lor is as deranged as a mad bull! [*Exit with Antoinette, R.*]

Sir H. They would have got me down to supper, and, just as I was drinking, I should have shared the fate of Edward the Martyr: that Gregory would have come behind me, and stuck his knife into my back-bone!— [*Turning, sees Gregory close beside him.*] Ha! I thought you were gone!

Gre. Don't be frightened, sir; I've something to communicate.

Sir H. You!—Eh?—What? Speak, man—I'm prepared!

Gre. You have no occasion to go and make yourself uneasy about all the accidents that have happened.

Sir H. [*Mysteriously.*] To what do you allude?—Tell me in a whisper—I'm all attention!

Gre. The monkey has come out of the boot of his own accord! [*Exit, L.*]

Sir H. What!—He means something by that; but I can't penetrate it—a very suspicious circumstance!

[*Exit, R.*]

SCENE II.—*The Room, with the Window and Dressing-Closet, as before—the drapery is drawn, and the bed, C. F., prepared—the room dark. RIGMAROLE discovered asleep in a high back arm-chair, near L. U. E.*

Enter ANTOINETTE, on tiptoe, R. D.

Ant. If Vincent would be but a little before his appointment! [*Going to the window.*] No, he's not come! Alas! [*Crossing to L.*] There is an entry this way from the back of the house by another staircase, but my father has taken the key of that door into the country with him. If there was the chance that he had left it open, I'd venture down; I could return before Sir Hippington Miff comes to bed. [*Rigmarole snores.*] Ah! the wretched servant sleeps under the influence of the opiate!—

Gently—gently! If the gate's unlocked, I could apprize Vincent.

[Exit, L. D.]

Madame Pelagie. [Without.] Where can Antoinette be? Now, my lor, your bed is ready.

Enter MADAME PELAGIE, R. D., lighting in SIR HIPINGTON MIFF.

Where is Antoinette I wonder?

[Places the candles on the table.]

Sir H. [Aside.] What is Old Combustible looking after?

Mad. P. There is your light, my lor. Why, I declare your man is still asleep!

Sir H. Very still; I lifted him into the arm-chair—more than he deserved. He must remain where he is, I suppose.

Mad. P. As you please, my lor. May sweet repose be your portion!

Sir H. Stuff and nonsense! [Aside.] You petticoat hypocrite!

Mad. P. Where can Antoinette be? [Exit, R. D.]

Sir H. But what's to be done with this somniferous valet? Try and wake him—[Pulling his nose.]—don't mind affronting a servant. He is as fast as his nose—[Pulling his ear.]—and very hard of hearing. [Rigmarole turns uneasily.] I had a hand in it. [Pulling his nose again.] Now, is the rascal feigning sleep?—If so, I'll probe him—I'll talk at him. Rigmarole, you sanguinary villain! are you in a conspiracy to rob your master? [Rigmarole snores.] Bless my soul! that was very suspicious! Rigmarole, if you will generously give up the instigator, I will reward you with a hundred pounds. [Pausing.] I hav'nt offered enough—two hundred! [Rigmarole turns and grunts.] I won't advance a bit further, you extortionate rascal! so you may as well wake at once. I might go on increasing my offer till this fellow became a sleeping-partner in my whole fortune. [Taking up a light.] Now to search the room. [Crossing to L. D.] An entrance here!—There are as many entrances as to a rabbit-warren. [Looking through the key-hole.] A dark staircase! Devilish suspicious! No bolt, no key, but a key-hole large enough to admit the barrel of a pistol. [Looking towards the bed.] I wish I had a bullet-proof night-cap; it would be safe to sleep with my head in a marble mortar. I don't at all like this door! [Rigmarole snores.] A lucky thought! My

best protection will be to wheel this Gascony dormouse, and block up the entrance with the chair. [*Wheels Rigmarole to the door, L.*] What an expanse of melancholy void! [*Going up to L. D. F.*] This door leads to my dressing-closet—I'll search that; my portmanteau is there—I'll poke my sword into every mouse-hole. [*The clock strikes the half-hour.*] Ha! half-past eleven! Bless me! the time's drawing very near Let me reflect: De Cachet said I was to go to bed; well, I'll go to bed—I shall not take all my clothes off, though; my night-cap and gown are in the dressing-room—I'll just step in and put them on.

[*Exit, with a candle and sword, into the dressing-closet,*
L. D. F.—*the room becomes dark.*

ANTOINETTE attempts to re-open L. D.—she forces her head and arm in, and finds the chair in the way.

Ant. How!—the great chair here! He has come to bed, then, and awakened his servant. [*Rigmarole snores.*] No—he still sleeps. I must remove him [*Pushes the chair away.*], and escape without observation.— [*Coming forward.*] The gate is locked! If I might venture one more peep at the window—

[*Crossing to the window on tiptoe.*

Enter MADAME PELAGIE, silently, in a night-dress, R. D.

Mad. P. [*In an under tone.*] Antoinette is here.

Ant. He will fancy I have forgotten all his tenderness—his vows of truth. Ah! when he pressed my hand!

Mad. P. [*Aside.*] Humph!

Ant. But he is so tardy; he surely will not deceive me to-night!

Mad. P. I'll take care that no one shall deceive you to-night. Fie! fie! Come; I'll talk to Sir Hippington in the morning, and give him warning!

[*She leads off Antoinette hastily, R. D.—Rigmarole moves, yawns gradually, awakes, and shakes himself.*

Rig. Ahem! How cold I am! Not in bed! Where can I possibly be? It's as dark as pitch! Is it last night or this morning, I wonder? My teeth chatter so, that I'm nibbling my tongue off. La! how I've been a dreaming! I dreamed that I was on the top of the tower of Notre Dame—I'm not sure that I arn't there now; it's so dark that I can't tell, if I move, down I go over the parapet into the street, and they'll find nothing of me

but my remains. [*Feeling over the side of the chair.*] I declare I'm a man in an arm-chair! [*Sir Hippington looks out, L. D. F.*] I had another dream, too: I dreamed that the ghost of Marshal Turenne asked me to take some soup with him. I saw him as plainly—[*Sir Hippington advances from the dressing-room in a long white night-gown and cap, with a candle and sword.*] Methought his tall figure stalked up to me, [*Sir Hippington advances close to Rigmarole's right side.*] and, just as I was about to swallow a ladle-ful of soup, he said, in a sepulchral tone—

Sir H. Rigmarole! [*Poking him with his sword.*]

Rig. [*Terrified.*] Mercy! mercy! good spectre generalissimo!

Sir H. Why, you fool, Rigmarole!

Rig. [*Jumping up.*] La! master, is it you? Oh dear, what a dream! Am I awake?

Sir H. (R.) I don't know; you have been asleep these three hours, and wheeling yourself about the room in the chair. Are you swollen at all?

Rig. (L.) Swollen, sir? No, quite empty—starved! Hold the candle behind me, you'll see the light through my body. [*Sir Hippington, opening his night-gown, discovers two brace of pistols stuck in a sash formed of his cravat, tied round his waist.*] La! sir, what are those for? You look like an armoury.

Sir H. Are you honest, Mr. Rigmarole?

Rig. Upon my honour, sir—try me.

Sir H. [*Aside.*] Shall I trust him? [*The clock strikes three quarters.*] Ha! a quarter of an hour now, and then—[*Shuddering.*] I find it impossible to be left by myself: if I detain Rigmarole in the room, he cannot communicate with any body. I know him to be an infernal coward, so I'm not afraid of him.

Rig. Wasn't that three quarters past eleven, sir?—Have you supped, sir? I'm very hungry: may I go down and get a mouthful, sir?

Sir H. You shall not leave the apartment—you have done without food all day.

Rig. Yes, sir, I have.

Sir H. Then you may do without all night.

Rig. Thank ye, sir. [*Aside.*] Oh, gizzards! how you'll grumble!

Sir H. You may take possession of the arm-chair again, or sleep on the floor. [*Gets on the bed.*]

Rig. Ah! you undertook to board me! La! Sir Hip-pington! are you going to bed in your inexpressibles?

Sir H. [*Fiercely.*] What's it to you, if I choose to sleep in my black velvets?

Rig. Shall I tuck you up, sir?

Sir H. Tuck me up! I sha'l see you tucked up one of these mornings: don't come near me—no more questions. [*Lets the curtain drop, and lies down on the bed, R. F.*]

Rig. But, sir, one word more.

Sir H. [*Looks out.*] You rascal!

Rig. You didn't say good night, sir.

Sir H. Curse you, good night! [*Disappears.*]

Rig. [*Aside, in an under-tone.*] My internals are so miserably empty, I shall try and creep down to Madame Pelagie's larder—get a little bit of something to keep life and soul together.

[*Creeps on all fours across the room, and goes off slyly, R. D.*]

Enter ROUE, climbing cautiously in at the window, L. U. E.

Sir H. Why are you stumping about the room?—I thought I told you, rascal, to sit down in the arm-chair—[*Rises in the bed.*] sit down directly, you villain! [*Rouè slips into the arm-chair, the back of it being towards the bed.*] Odso! just thought on't—go into the dressing-closet at your left hand—bring my portmanteau here with the papers, bond, and money—I don't choose to trust it out of my sight—why don't you go?

[*Rouè pushes the chair back until he is near enough to the table to blow out the candle—he then feels his way to the closet, L. D. F.*]

Sir H. You careless rascal! why have you knocked the light out?—That's a more suspicious circumstance than any: this is very awful! I wish it was twelve o'clock—what a time this Rigmarole is getting the portmanteau!—How shall I occupy my uneasy mind?—I have heard that it's a good thing to count numerically—I'll try. [*Sighs.*] 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, &c.

Rouè. [*In an under-tone, coming from the room with the bond in his hand.*] The bond is mine—now to regain the window, for numberless reasons.

Sir H. 23, 24, 25, 26—Rigmarole!

[*Rouè opens the window, and is climbing out.*]

Vincent. [*Calling beneath the window.*] Antoinette, is that you, love?

Rouè. Confusion! foiled! no matter.

Vin. I'm very late—are they all in bed?

Sir H. [*Putting his head out between the curtains.*] I am. [*Calling.*] Rigmarole, I say!

Rouè. I must try to escape this way.

[*Goes to l. D., and opens it.*]

Bon. [*Calling without, l.*] Bombadier!

Bab. [*Without, l.*] Here.

Rouè. The captain's coming—no matter.

[*Runs up and goes into the closet, l. D. F.*]

Sir H. There are six different voices—where's Monsieur De Cachet?

Enter BONASSUS and BABILLARD, with a cabriolet lamp, cloaks, and pistol, l. D.

Bon. Hush! we must not alarm the house.

Bab. No.

Bon. Cursed unfortunate that the old cabriolet should have broken down.

Bab. Yes.

Bon. We shall have the women screaming—this is a bad job, Bombadier: here we are, and I hav'nt effected my purpose.

Sir H. [*Peeping out.*] Two banditti!

Bon. Devil take the bond! I wish the English fool who holds it had never made up his mind to come here. Did you bring my pistols out of the cabriolet?

Sir H. Oh, murder!

Bon. What's that?

Bab. Voice.

Bon. Bring the lamp—why, this window's open!

[*Holds the lamp to it.*]

Vin. [*Below, l. U. E.*] Is that you, my beloved?

Bon. Who, in the name of fury, is my beloved? [*A large pistol falls from the bed.*] The devil! this came from the bed—yet no one can be there. Look, comrade—let us search.

[*They lift up a curtain and discover Sir Hippington standing on the bed, pointing his pistols.*]

Bon. [*Starting away.*] Murder!

Bab. Thieves!

Sir H. Murder! thieves!

Bon. Comrade, let us throw him out of the window.

Bab. Ay.

[*They rush up, disarm Sir Hippington, lift him off the bed, and carry him towards the window.*]

Sir H. [*Kicking and bawling.*] Monsieur De Cachet! help! help!

Vin. [*Coming in at the window.*] Hollo, gentlemen!
 [They relinquish Sir Hippington, who retreats behind an arm-chair.]

Bon. Where do you come from, Mr. Vincent Dorville?

Vin. Your pardon, captain. Passing the garden, I heard a noise—the father of my Antoinette in danger, I mounted the trellis—what is the matter?

Sir H. The matter, sir?—You look like a gentleman—I was quiet here in my own bed.

Bon. Your bed! it's my bed.

Sir H. I beg to assert it is my bed—I pay for it—I took possession of these apartments to-day—they are mine.

Bon. The bond has been demanded in my absence; you have taken possession of this house legally, and I suppose you'll walk off with every thing, and throw me into gaol.

Sir H. You were going to throw me out of the window, you know.

Vin. Explain this, Captain Bonassus.

Sir H. Captain Bonassus—oh, I see it all!—Oh, Bonassus! [*Calling.*] Rigmarole! Rigmarole, I say!

Enter RIGMAROLE, R. D., with a candle.

Rig. [*Staring.*] Yes, sir!—La, Sir Hippington Miff has company—one, two.

Sir H. I told you to fetch my trunk from the dressing-closet—go, I want the bond for twenty thousand francs, signed by Captain Bonassus.

[*Rigmarole opens the door of the dressing-closet, l. F.*

Rig. Oh, oh, Sir Hippington!

Sir H. [*Alarmed.*] What's the matter?

Rig. More company—pray walk in, gentlemen.

Enter MONSIEUR DE CACHET, and ROUE in custody of two Police Officers, from the dressing-closet, l. F.—De Cachet puts the bond into Sir Hippington's hand.

Bon. Ex-Lieutenant Rouè, how is it I find you here?

Rouè. No matter.

De C. The ex-lieutenant has been wanted by us some time. Sir Hippington Miff, cease your anxiety—there is the object of your alarm. [*Pointing to Rouè.*

Sir H. The only person in the house by whom I have not been frightened—perhaps, after all, these may be comfortable lodgings.

Bon. Lodgings!

Rig. Yes; I have hired these comfortable lodgings to-day of Madame Pelagie, furnished.

Sir H. Yes, furnished with all sorts of inconveniences.

Rig. And here come the ladies to vouch the fact.

Enter MADAME PELAGIE and ANTOINETTE, R. D.—Vincent crosses behind to Antoinette, L.

Mad. P. Brother Bonassus returned! why, the house is full of people.

Sir H. Yes, madame; and now it is past twelve, and all is safe, I'll be very much obliged to you to get us some supper—I invite the party, the ex-lieutenant excepted. Suppose you roast the pig I killed—Egad! I'm so overjoyed that the night has ended as it has, that, ladies and gentlemen, I will, with your permission, continue for very many evenings in COMFORTABLE LODGINGS.

FINALE.

Since with laughter woes are ended,
 We conclude our whim and fright;
 In new lodgings now befriended,
 Hope to see you many a night.
 Come and see,
 Come and see,
 Come and see, you'll find all right.

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